

Colonel Sanchez,
Dr. Angangco,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

We are gathered here this afternoon to honor distinguished persons who, for no other reason except love and charity, have contributed immeasurably in our important work in this hospital for the cure and comfort of our sick and disabled veterans. It is humanly impossible to evaluate the services which these good Samaritans have rendered to the patients here. The services that they have rendered are not tangible, not measurable in terms of money but in terms of that inner satisfaction one feels when he sees that he has helped to save human lives. It is said that the present is built upon the past and that what is achieved today determines what we can expect of the future. If this is true, judging from the magnificent work you have done in the past, we can all hope for a bigger enthusiasm and greater achievements in the future.

We Christians must welcome the fact that the sense of responsibility toward our neighbors is not confined to the area around our homes, but is extended to hospitals and similar institutions and has become a sense of duty toward mankind. Our neighbor whom Christ has directed that we love as we love ourselves is to be found everywhere and has become a national responsibility and a

Christian duty. The good Christian who has a right understanding of his task in community service is constantly aware that he is only an instrument and a servant of God. Only in this way he will rightly understand the service which as a Christian, he must render to suffering humanity.

An earnest, sincere and devoted volunteer has an important place in a hospital program in which the treatment is a total staff responsibility. The volunteer fills a unique role as a representative of the community at large, which has an important meaning to the patients. The fact that the volunteer does not receive financial remuneration and yet is deeply interested in helping the sick and the unfortunate has a powerful and beneficial effect on the patient.

Allow me to narrate to you an impressive story written by William Sidney Porter. Jim and Della married very young. They had just two possessions in which they both took great pride. The one, a gold watch that Jim had inherited from his father, and the other, Della's hair, beautiful and so long that it would reach below her knees when she would let it down. In her weaker moments, she wished to possess a beautiful set of combs, but because of their poverty, she could not hope to get. They were expensive combs.

When Christmas came and Della counted her money to get Jim a present, she found she had just one dollar and eighty-

seven cents. What could she do with this meagre amount, to buy something worthy of Jim? Suddenly, she had a wonderful idea, and before she could change her mind, she dashed out of the house and offered her hair to Madame Sofroni in her "Hair Saloon". Twenty dollars she received for those beautiful, rippling locks, and then she ransacked the stores for Jim's present. She found a platinum fob chain, simple and chaste in design but worthy of Jim's watch. She thought that Jim would now be able to look at his watch in any company instead of concealing it because of his shabby, old leather strap.

She arranged what was left of her hair the best she could and as Jim came in, she prayed: "Please, God, make him think I am still pretty".

When she saw his stupefied looks, she said: "Yes, dear, I sold it, but be good to me, Jim, for it went for you. Don't you like me just the same? I am me without my hair, ain't I? May be the hairs of my head were numbered, but nobody could ever count my love for you."

"Don't make any mistake about me, Dell", Jim answered. "There is nothing in the way of a haircut that could make me like my girl any less. Unwrap that package, you may see what I had for you." Sure enough, there in the package were the combs. She never thought that such lovely things could possibly be hers.

"It will be all right, Jim. My hair grows so fast,"

she said at last. And in her exquisite happiness, she presented her present to Jim. "Isn't it beautiful, Jim? I hunted all over town to find it. You'll have to look at the time a hundred times a day now. Give me your watch, I want to see how it looks in it."

But just as there were no adorning tresses for the beautiful combs, neither was there a watch for that worthy little fob.

These two young people were the greatest and noblest givers on earth. It is a wonderful thing to convince another that he or she is dearly loved, and it is a worthy emollient to a tired heart and a drooping spirit once in a while to enjoy that revelation.

This, distinguished volunteers, you have succeeded in doing. You have shown to these poor and unfortunate veterans that they are not alone in their sufferings, and that there are many kind persons, who, like the good Samaritan, try to bring comfort and happiness to the sick and the unfortunate. There is plenty of love and sweetness in us all. I urge you to continue giving generously of your kindness and friendliness. This is a challenge for you, volunteers, and for all fellow citizens. Can we, in conscience, count our blessings without a thought for those less-blessed than us? Your sacrifices constitute an assurance to all that this shall never be.

The life of every man or woman is a diary in which he or she means to write one story, but writes another. And his or her humblest hour is when they compare the volume as it is with what they hoped to make it. The best story of our life is told not in writing, but in deeds; not in statistics, but in the lives of people whom we have helped to make more comfortable and happier and their sufferings more bearable. And as we reach the snowy winter of our life from which there is no more return to spring, we can look back in retrospect with the poignant awareness of our mistakes, but conscious of the fact that through our inspiration, enthusiasm and understanding kindness, we have enriched the lives of those poor patients who are less blessed than us.

Henry Ford, the automobile magnate, once wrote: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." In congratulating you all, distinguished volunteer workers, for the excellent work performed, I wish to give you this parting message: Continue working together without rest in the fulfillment of your noble objectives and always remember the words of Jesus: "FOR THEY SHALL BE KNOWN BY THEIR WORKS."

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Speech delivered at the
Veterans Memorial Hospital
re: Appreciation Ceremony for
Volunteers
Thursday, November 19, 1959